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Important Examples of

OLD CHINESE PORCELAIN

from

GORER OF LONDON

on Exhibition at

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The Indian in Art

By ANNE LISLE BOOTH

IN a country, parts of which have passed in one generation from a primeval wilderness offering shelter for savages to the highest state of enlightenment that the world has ever known, there are naturally to be found some few very interesting men whose experiences have run the gamut from savagery to civilization. Only a few of these veterans of these pioneer days remain to charm and instruct the present generation who may count it good fortune indeed to have known them and to have listened to the stories they tell of adventures as wild and as thrilling as any in the pages of fiction.

It is particularly fortunate that among the scouts and frontiersmen of early days there should have been one gifted with something better than the mere power of an artist with a great gift for faithful portraiture who could

hand down to posterity absolutely authentic likenesses of the representative men of a passing race, the famous chiefs of the tribes of western Indians. The T. B. Walker collection of historic Indians as painted by H. H. Cross of Chicago is an invaluable legacy of history and art to America. It comprises canvases representing every noted Indian warrior, diplomat or scout of the early days, and in a manner so finished and with such nicety of detail that nothing could be better suited for museums or educational purposes.

H. H. Cross, the famous old Indian painter is scarcely less than interesting as a man than as an artist. Seventy-six years of adventure, peril and incessant work could hardly have been expected to set so lightly upon body, heart and mind. Hale, jovial and full of interest and enthusiasm for the art which he still

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pursues diligently. Mr. Cross is a unique figure among artists and a charming companion for a leisure afternoon.

His wide brimmed soft black hat had a homey look to a western eye and there was nothing in his speech or manner to suggest the traditional temperamental painter man. He seemed rather very much a man among men, one who had seen the wildest, roughest side of life, traveled over the world among strange uncivilized peoples. His studio too is notable for the absence of that old curious jumble of beautiful things which crowds wall and shelf and windsowsill in the typical atelier, in fact the bluff old plainsman discards the word studio and refers to his workroom as the foundry. Canvases crowd each other in stacks against the wall, sketches, finished pictures and those which still lack a few hours or a few days' work. You feel that you are in the presence of a man who works sincerely, too absorbed in the task at hand to care about the surroundings.

Mr. Cross began painting animals when only fifteen years of age and a little later while living the life of a frontiersman he turned to Indian portraiture, traveling all through the west in the late fifties and early sixties, living in the tepees of the Sioux, Ogallalas, Utes, Ciowas, Shoshones, Piutes, Cheyennes, Nez Perce and other tribes of the west and northwest. He was welcome among the Indians whose friendship and confidence he won to a point where they consented to pose for him. He has immortalized on canvas the individual features, tribal characteristics and distinctive costumes of all the great heroes among the simple red men in the days of their formidable resistance to the encroachments of the dreaded white race.

Mr. Cross speaking from intimate acquaintance and close personal observation of these men is not afraid to declare that the great Indian tribes of the west were a worthy and noble people, comparing favorably in all that constitutes character with any of the more

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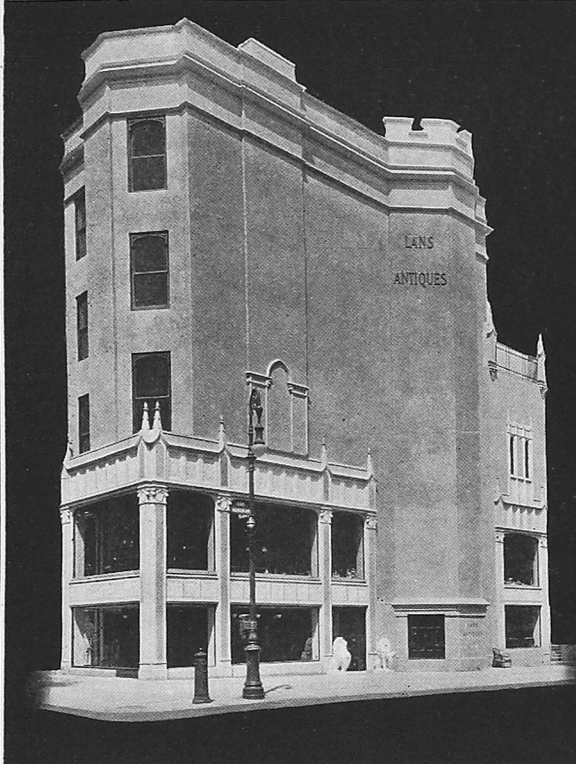
civilized people and that their chiefs were men of sentiment and intellect as well as courage. He blames the Indian uprisings to the dishonesty and double dealing of white men and to their two most disturbing inventions, whisky and politics. Nor can this testimony of one who speaks from knowledge at first hand be despised. It would be interesting could Mr. Cross write and illustrate a history of the Indian, a task for which no man now living could be better fitted.

His pictures are full of the gay colors beloved by the red men, the artist, however, insisting that the harmony and beauty of hues which characterize his canvases is not to be credited to his artistic instincts but to that of his sitters whose taste in dress, though gorgeous, was none the less aesthetic he avers. "Only among the Soudanese," he said, "have I ever seen such beautiful savage costumes, reflecting so true a sense of color and harmony." Mr. Cross spent much time in India

and Africa and during these experiences he had a brilliant opportunity to study the costumes of aboriginal tribes of other lands and his observation on the taste of the American Indians as compared with other savages must therefore be regarded as authority.

The most notable of Mr. Cross' Indian portrait from the T. B. Walker collection have been reproduced in a little booklet which is as fascinating as a series of short stories. These studies and the accompanying historical data concerning each which the artist has supplied, comprise a little monograph on the Indian which would form a quaint and valuable addition to any library of American history. Inasmuch as Mr. Cross spent a great deal of time with Generals Reno, Crook, and Miles and was a personal friend of all the great scouts and noted plainmen, his condensed biographies of chiefs and frontier characters are particularly interesting.

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At O'Brien's, for instance, the walls are at present hung with some of the finest works of yesterday, during the lull in cotemporary exhibitions, and one may take a retrospective view of painting and realize afresh the charm of the school just preceding that of today.

Among these pictures is a Cazin that always fascinates with a subtle familiarity of scene. It shows how appealing a simple theme may be when handled with sincere artistry. A low bush or tree with white flowers on the sloping bank of a quiet sea under a starlit evening sky, it suggests our own lake front at a point on the drive just before one reaches the park. It might prove an inspiration to local painters for the study of the artistic possibilities of this

section of Chicago, since similar water fronts abroad lend themselves so charmingly to pictorial ends.

In this exhibition also is an unusual Daubigny of the quality which collectors are seeking, presenting a lighter, fresher expanse of greens than is always to be found in his work, with a pink glow spreading over a sky that is much lighter in tone than in many Daubigny's

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exhibits the master in both his famed methods. Its foreground, particularly, bespeaks the growing inclination toward the subjective manner of painting which characterized his later works. It is a beautiful scene with a faraway vista like another picture, seen through the opening of the trees.

One of the finest examples of Wyant to be seen anywhere is also on display here. It shows the Hudson River School influence and is a very highly finished picture, not a sketch. Many Wyants, offered as finished works are, in reality, only preliminary sketches and, while strong and masterful, nevertheless do not afford a complete appreciation of his artistry.

One of those things which appear on the market only at rare intervals is a Wallachian Schreyer, which, but for the horses, one would scarcely recognize as from this master's brush. It presents a wide landscape in the moist and tender greens and greys of an early Russian spring. The landscape and sky in themselves compose a picture of rare beauty in quiet color and masterly handling. An Arabian Schreyer on the wall offers fine contrast in the brilliance of its hues.

Moran is seen in his most poetic mood in "Castle Rock," a canvas of livable size and fine quality. His usual brilliance of color when painting western landscapes is not wanting, and the sky is *Turneresque* with its torn clouds gilded with light and stained with the dying sun.

A wonderful Hart compares favorably with the VanMarcke which hangs next it, if, indeed, it does not surpass it in desirability. With Hart the cattle are only the subject of a picture whose setting is a charming landscape with an unrivaled sky effect. It is a decorative and delightful thing which recommends itself for a home interior.

Dupre is represented by a characteristic and important example of his evening themes. Feathery sea-weedy foliage on brown trees and a greying blue sky athwart which float vaporous white clouds with edges that seem to thin into transparency, all stamp the picture with the mark of Dupre's individuality.